

The Gaspé **SPEC**

ESTABLISHED • MAY 1975

VOLUME 50 / NO 36, SEPTEMBER 11, 2024

Contract 40019680
\$1.75 (Tax included)

Bluegrass festival reaches new heights

● CYNTHIA DOW

NEW RICHMOND: - This year's Bluegrass Festival reached new heights in its 22nd year. "Friday night we reached a record. There were over 2,000 people here," says organizer Mike Geraghty. Official numbers were not available when SPEC went to press.

One of the highlights of this year's festival was two 90-minute shows by Dan

Tyminski, an American bluegrass star with 14 Grammy awards under his belt. Originally from Vermont but now living in Nashville, Mr. Tyminski has been part of Allison Kraus' band, Union Station, since 1984. He has won Male Vocalist of the Year from the International Bluegrass Music Association four times. When he played his second show on Saturday, August 31, he told the crowd, "I'm feeling great tonight!"

Given their applause, it seemed the crowd was feeling great as well.

On the festival's Facebook page, another American performer, Mike Mitchell, said he was delighted with the festival and the area. "(We) have been literally all over the world this year and this is absolutely one of the top most beautiful places we've ever been. A fine group of people. Great pickers. Wonderful jamming. I can't recommend

the New Richmond Bluegrass Festival enough."

Of course, the festival would not be complete without the many multi-talented local and regional musicians who can be counted on year after year, including Roger Lee Martin who also plays the role of MC in three languages, Ray Legère and native-born Gaspesian Frank Doody from New Brunswick, and Dominick Briand, who not only sang with his band, the Clemville Outlaws, but also helped out at the soundboard.

At the Open Mic on Saturday afternoon, Jesse Hunt,

artist Tennyson Johnson's grandson, played a tune or two, as well as a couple from the Chateauguay Valley Grass Roots organization, Greg Bohemen and Nemira Rose, whose harmonies were much appreciated by the audience.

Mike Geraghty told SPEC he is indebted to the 30 volunteers who worked this year. "The number of volunteers is down since the pandemic. We could use about 50 altogether, but these 30 are really dedicated, working 24 hours a day during the event. We couldn't do it without them."

More photos on page 16.



The harmonies of newcomers, Greg Bohemen and Nemira Rose, were much appreciated by the crowd.



Jesse Hunt took the stage during the Open Mic on Saturday, August 31.



Left, Dominick Briand and right, Roger Lee Martin, are fixtures at the annual Bluegrass Festival.

Photos: C. Dow



Immigration Ministry selects new organizations for immigrant integration in the Bay of Chaleur area

GILLES GAGNÉ

BONAVENTURE – Quebec’s Ministry of Immigration, Francisation and Integration has transferred the responsibility of immigrant integration in the Bay of Chaleur area to two organizations that were not deeply entrenched in that field: the Saint-Alphonse-Nouvelle Volunteer Action Centre and Horizon Emploi.

The ministry, often referred to as the MIFI, confirms that it has ceased its collaboration with Carrefour jeunesse-emploi Avignon-Bonaventure, which managed this responsibility for years.

In late June, Carrefour jeunesse-emploi director general Ronald Ménard requested more money for the integration of newcomers, citing a sharp increase in service demands. Due to insufficient funding, the organization suspended its services over the summer and laid off two employees.

On August 29, then Minister of Immigration, Francisation and Integration Christine Fréchette announced a total grant of \$160,000 for the Centre d’action bénévole (CAB) Saint-Alphonse-Nouvelle and Horizon Emploi. The amount is split equally between the two organizations: the Volunteer Action Centre will work in the Avignon MRC, while Horizon Emploi will handle the Bonaventure MRC.

Minister Fréchette explained why her government chose to end its agreement with Carrefour jeunesse-emploi, which has expertise and qualified personnel in immi-

gration matters.

“They preferred not to sign the agreement with us that we put on the table. Instead, we worked with organizations that have all the skills to ensure that the mandate that accompanies this envelope is fulfilled,” says Christine Fréchette, who is now Minister of the Economy, Innovation and Energy.

Catherine Blouin, Member of the National Assembly for Bonaventure, admitted on August 29 that she had not met Ronald Ménard following his June 27 request for a meeting to explain his position.

“What is important to us is really maintaining the service, because it is very important to have adequate support for people who arrive here,” says Catherine Blouin, Member of the National Assembly for Bonaventure.

She added that members of her staff had met with Mr. Ménard after he expressed his position about the lack of resources for immigrants.

Minister Fréchette also noted that the agreement proposed to the organization was an improved one, but she did not specify the details of the private nature of the agreement.

Another version

Carrefour jeunesse-emploi (CJE) Avignon-Bonaventure Director General Ronald Ménard indicates that this increase in funding represents only an 8% rise over the amount provided to his organization last year for the same mandate.

While the CJE has been providing this service in Avignon for nine years and in Bonaventure since 2019, Mr. Ménard notes that the amount proposed by Quebec was clearly insufficient to deliver adequate services.

“In a context where demand is exploding, the organization had instead requested funding of approximately \$450,000 from the province, which would have allowed it, among other things, to hire two additional employees. According to Mr. Ménard, the idea was to provide quality services in quantity,” he explains.

A big part of the problem lies in the distribution mode of ministry funding, underlines Mr. Ménard.

“With more than 32,000 inhabitants, the territory covered by the CJE which extends over the two MRCs of Avignon and Bonaventure does not receive funding comparable to other CJE in Quebec whose services benefit the population of a single MRC,” underlines Mr. Ménard.

He adds that one doesn’t have to go very far to find examples illustrating his statement.

“A day after the (August 29) announcement in Bonaventure, Minister Fréchette was in the Magdalen Islands and announced \$190,000 (over two years, which still represents more on a per capita basis) for that territory’s immigration service. The Maggies represent the equivalent of one MRC, a much smaller territory than



Photos: G. Gagné

Then Immigration Minister Christine Fréchette, right, announced on August 29 that her ministry has selected two other organizations to handle the integration of immigrants in the Avignon and Bonaventure MRCs. Also in the photo is the Member of the National Assembly for Bonaventure, Catherine Blouin.

our two MRCs and we had to do the work with \$144,000 before July.

Now, the two organizations selected by the ministry work with \$80,000 each for the whole Bay of Chaleur, for a total of \$160,000. In Côte-de-Gaspé, a single MRC, they receive \$144,000, which is the amount we used to get for two MRCs,” stresses Mr. Ménard. “Our organization is a victim of having to serve two MRCs when this is not sufficiently recognized in the funding allocation methods. And this, not only for MIFI (Ministry of Immigration, Francisation and Integration), is a systemic and historical issue,” affirms Ronald Ménard.

He adds that SANA’s expertise is a valuable and essential resource to the civic harmonization of individuals of all ages who wish to flourish in the Bay of Chaleur.

“The increase in needs is such that our two employees assigned to taking care of immigrants were completely exhausted at the end of June and would have refused to take on the same responsibilities without help. Look, we just have to check around on the street and we see the newcomers. They deserve quantity and quality services if we are to integrate them properly,” says Mr. Ménard.

He also points out that one of the two programs offered by the CJE, the Community support program, which ran from 2021 to December 2023, still hasn’t been renewed, funding-wise. The envelope

amounted to \$212,000 for the two MRCs.

“We were ready to compromise for \$100,000 while the Ministry of Immigration was to review the whole program. The MRCs were ready to contribute even if it was not their mandate because they recognized the usefulness of the program. Since January 2024, the program has been suspended. We are now waiting for January 2025. In the meantime, immigrants still knock at our door,” concludes Ronald Ménard.

Premier Legault’s response

During his visit to Saint-Elzéar on June 28, Quebec Premier François Legault was asked whether this closure of services to help newcomers did not contradict his argument of welcoming fewer immigrants to provide better care.

“It is difficult for me to comment on a specific case. I would have to look at what is happening in this organization. But when I look at the funding of all the newcomer integration organizations, we have exploded the budgets in recent years but it is not enough because there has been an even greater explosion in the number of immigrants. So, we would have to look at the files one by one. We have already invested and will continue to invest in the integration of immigrants,” underlined Mr. Legault.



During his June 28 visit to Saint-Elzéar, Quebec’s Premier François Legault, centre, said he would need to examine the SANA situation in the Bay of Chaleur area before further commenting. He is flanked in the photo by the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance, Gilles Bélanger, and the Member of the National Assembly for Bonaventure, Catherine Blouin.

Police report

The Superior Court hearing for Simon Dufort-Chouinard, 19, from Rivière-au-Renard, charged with two murders, scheduled for September 3 has been postponed until December 2, at the Percé Courthouse. Defence attorney Ariane Cayer of Chandler requested the postponement, as she is seeking an expert for her client and has requested a waiver of deadlines for this postponement.

"We still don't know if the defence will be ready to set trial dates in December 2024 or if they will need more time," points out criminal prosecutor Isabelle Gavioli.

The accused is charged with the premeditated murder of Gabriel Noël and the unpremeditated murder of Dylan Samuel-Francoeur following a fatal collision on May 10, 2023, in Rivière-au-Renard. Both victims were aged 18 and 19.

Simon Dufort-Chouinard's preliminary hearing ended on April 3 at the Percé Courthouse. He has opted for a Superior Court trial before a judge and jury. The preliminary hearing, which began on March 13, was postponed on March 15 before resuming on April 2. A total of 27 witnesses, including Rivière-au-Renard residents and experts, testified before Quebec Court Judge Martin Gagnon over five days of hearings, including those of March 13-14-15.

Initially, 34 witnesses were scheduled to testify in March and April, but the defence ultimately waved seven testimonies. The preliminary hearing normally determines whether there is enough evidence for a trial. In the case of Simon Dufort-Chouinard, the defence has already admitted that there is sufficient evidence for a trial but requested a preliminary hearing. Simon Dufort-Chouinard has been detained at the New Carlisle prison since his arrest and will remain there until his trial. A publication ban prohibits reporting the facts presented during the preliminary hearing. His father, Marc-Jules Chouinard, faces a manslaughter charge in this case. He was conditionally released on November 20, 2023, pending further proceedings.

A collision involving four cars and a motorcycle occurred around lunchtime on August 30 in Gaspé. According to the Sûreté du Québec communications department, one person sustained minor injuries. The accident happened on Pointe-Navarre Boulevard shortly before 1 p.m. Traffic was paralyzed while the road was being cleared and then resumed on only one lane before being fully restored an hour and a half after the accident.

On August 30, Alicia Rose Forget, 16, from Pointe-à-la-Croix, who had been missing since the previous day, was found deceased in Campbellton. Her body was discovered in the middle of the afternoon. According to RCMP spokesperson François Côté, there is no evidence to suggest foul play.

Weather: A calm August

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - The month of August will not go down in history in terms of weather.

It rained slightly more than usual, with Gaspé receiving 96 millimetres of rain, compared to the normal 91 millimetres.

However, this is a sharp contrast compared to August 2023, which set a record with 302 millimetres of rain.

The temperature was above normal, with an estimated average of 18.3°C based on incomplete data, according to Environment Canada.

The normal temperature is 16.6°C, representing a 1.7 degree increase.

The meteorological summer, which includes June, July and August, ends with 184 millimetres of precipitation, 32% below the normal 270 millimetres for the quarter.

Last year, 510 millimetres of rain fell at the Gaspé airport during the same period.

THEGASPESPEC.COM

418-752-5400

SPECS@GLOBETROTTER.NET

Escuminac Mayor Bruce Wafer wants more details about Dalhousie's pozzolan exploitation project

GILLES GAGNÉ

ESCUMINAC – Escuminac's Mayor Bruce Wafer would like additional information about Ecorock Dalhousie's project to exploit a pozzolan deposit in an existing quarry.

The project is situated across the Restigouche River, facing Escuminac's Fleurant Point sector. The firm has projected two phases for the venture, with one of them starting in 2025 consisting of aggregate shipments to the East Coast of the United States.

A second phase requires an in-depth environmental assessment, which could be initiated in 2025, with pozzolan powder exports potentially beginning at the end of 2026 or in 2027.

"We need more information. Alone, our municipality doesn't bear a big weight. We will need to make a stand once we have more information. We also know that the Avignon MRC will take a stand soon but also once our prefect Mathieu (Lapointe) gets better information," affirms Mayor Wafer.

"We don't know the exact magnitude of the project. We know that the government of Blaine Higgs is favouring big industrial ventures. We also know that Northern New Brunswick is quite devitalized. What is the price to pay to revitalize it? I don't know," adds Bruce Wafer.

"Most sectors of Escuminac are facing Dalhousie, whether it is Fleurant's Point, Escuminac Flats, Escuminac or Pointe-à-la-Garde. Dalhousie is visible from all those sectors," he stresses.

Bruce Wafer is aware that an opposition movement is gaining momentum in New Brunswick. He is also aware that a similar movement is growing on the Gaspesian side of the Bay of Chaleur and Restigouche River.

"In fact, representatives of the Gaspesian movement opposed to the project are coming to see the (Escuminac) council on Thursday (September 5, past SPEC's deadline). Some council members are anxious to know more about the project," underlines Bruce Wafer.

Environmental Assessment in New Brunswick

He notably wants to learn how the New Brunswick environmental approval process



Photo: G. Gagné

Mayor Bruce Wafer wonders if it will be possible for Gaspésians to influence a project located in New Brunswick.

works.

"Personally, I am familiar with Quebec's BAPE process because I followed the public hearings of the two wind farms located near Escuminac. However, I ignore the New Brunswick process. I have noticed during the COVID crisis that everything in New Brunswick is heavily centralized in Fredericton. Local initiatives can be good. You can get along with New Brunswick people and then the government will decide about them. That's what Gaspésians experienced during the pandemic," analyzes Mr. Wafer.

To be considered regarding the pozzolan project, Gaspésians will need to contact the politicians of all levels, he opines.

"As I said, we need more information about the project and the regulation that will determine its parameters. We would like to align our stand with the broad position of the MRC. It is an evolutive process. We have to get a hold of the venture's details and we will need to listen too. We are

neighbours (with New Brunswickers). The way they will take into account our position remains to be seen," concludes Mayor Wafer.

So far, Gaspésians opposed to the project fear the effects of the dredging operation required to export pozzolan in large quantities overseas, as sediments along the port of Dalhousie are contaminated to a degree that remains to be determined. Ecorock Dalhousie expects to export pozzolan loads in ships with a capacity of 70,000 tons.

They also express concerns that dust, noise and scenery modifications will affect their quality of life.

Pozzolan can be used in the cement production process and allegedly reduces its environmental impact because, once reduced to powder, it doesn't need to be heated like clinker, the main component of cement.

Ecorock Dalhousie's Director General Francis Forlini has committed to holding an information session in the Gaspé Peninsula at one point during the project's preparation stage.



VILLAGE
Real Estate Agency

Suzanne Landry

CERTIFIED REAL ESTATE BROKER AEO
418-752-0792

suzannelandry@royallepage.ca
www.suzannelandry.ca

Friendly bilingual service from Matapedia to Port Daniel
24 years experience



Gilles Gagné

Commentary

More tough times ahead for François Legault

Former Minister Pierre Fitzgibbon, arguably the most powerful minister in the Quebec government over the last few decades, resigned from politics on September 4, because he was... tired of politics. At nearly 70 years old, Mr. Fitzgibbon was no longer willing to make the compromises required in politics.

In time, we may learn more about the reasons behind his decision to resign. However, whether we liked him or not, his direct way of answering questions usually allowed listeners to get the record straight. It was both a strength and a weakness.

Coming from the business sector, Pierre Fitzgibbon did not need politics to make a living. By the time he was first elected in the riding of Terrebonne in 2018, when the Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) party formed the government, he was already 63 and financially independent.

He quickly occupied a major function in that government. That function was enhanced following the 2022 election as the Energy portfolio in addition to his previous responsibilities in Economy and Innovation. Scientific research was added to his portfolio, though he showed little interest in that field. In 2022, he was also tasked with Regional Development and appointed minister responsible for Montreal.

An Outspoken Minister

Journalists will certainly miss Pierre Fitzgibbon for certain aspects of his personality. He was outspoken to a rare degree, almost a loose cannon at times, and in a political world controlled by image makers and public relations people, his positions were most of the times refreshing.

His blunders also got him in trouble. Quebec's Ethics Commissioner launched six investigations into Pierre Fitzgibbon's actions, notably because of his close acquaintances with people from the business sector. He often waived the fact that his business contacts were theoretically supposed to

talk to him through the lobbying register if they wanted to reach him.

He didn't care much about the Ethics Commissioner, as he rarely adjusted to her recommendation, which triggered cynicism in the public. He didn't care much about public criticism either.

Sophie Brochu, the former chief executive officer of Hydro-Québec, left the public utility because of Pierre Fitzgibbon's strong presence in her management, even though she never really came right out and said that. She used more subtle ways to express the reasons behind her departure.

He was a man full of contradictions. He wanted to channel a lot of electricity towards the new automobile, truck and bus battery manufacturing plants that he promoted, only to say shortly after that Quebecers had to reduce by half the number of vehicles on their roads if they wanted to respect the greenhouse gas emission targets.

Moreover, the individual car battery plant under construction by Northvolt, a project he fiercely defended, is far from what our society has to do in order to respect those same emission reduction goals.

Strange timing for a departure

In business, most people who launch a project will at least stay until the ribbon cutting ceremony before leaving, or before launching another venture. In that, Pierre Fitzgibbon failed.

He had said on many occasions since the spring that he would likely not stay until the end of his term as Member of the National Assembly and, by the same token, as the most powerful minister in François Legault's cabinet.

However, most people were expecting him to stay at least until the end of the year, since the parliamentary session was about to start when he officially announced that he was retiring from politics on September 4.

So, he will not be there to explain and defend what he had himself called the utmost program of his political career, the new energy policy that is supposed to lead Quebec into the next decades. It could have been a sound way to pull out of politics.

He decided otherwise. Again, Pierre Fitzgibbon showed that he walks to the beat of his own drum.

He also leaves at a time when the Northvolt project is experiencing problems.

The CAQ will face the test of a by-election

Pierre Fitzgibbon and François Legault have a long-standing friendship dating back to their business days.

Pierre Fitzgibbon was the only person in the premier's cabinet who could say just about anything he wanted, even if it was sometimes coming in full contradiction with what François Legault was expressing.

The premier has promised for months, if not years, that Hydro-Québec's rates for households will never increase by more than 3% annually, while Mr. Fitzgibbon knows darn well that they will rise above 3% if the public utility is to keep serving its customers while taking the decarbonization turn.

Saying that Pierre Fitzgibbon found a strange way to help his friend Legault is an understatement. Leaving politics at the dawn of the National Assembly session was far from a nice goodbye handshake, even though Mr. Legault, knowing that his super minister would not finish his term, apparently wanted him to quit now, instead of having to face questions about that departure until 2025.

The CAQ government must now call a by-election within six months. The riding of Terrebonne has been represented by a Parti Québécois Member of the National Assembly over 41 of the last 48 years. Pierre Fitzgibbon's six years and a very short term as an Action démocratique du Québec Member of the National Assembly in 2007-2008 were the sole exceptions.

Given Parti Québécois leader Paul Saint-Pierre-Plamondon's momentum of late, and given the rate of dissatisfaction tied to the CAQ since the spring of 2023, the Terrebonne by-election will represent one hell of a test for François Legault.

Moreover, in his heavily centralized government, as long as Pierre Fitzgibbon was around, the premier could share some of the attention with his friend.

Since nobody will likely occupy the spotlight the way Pierre Fitzgibbon did, the attention will converge towards Premier Legault. He has a tendency to make blunders as well, and increasingly since his October 2022 re-election.

François Legault has a wealth of experience in politics and he can take blows. However, the toughest period of his National Assembly career could well be ahead of him, instead of in the past.

THANKS to Our Readers!
Your subscription helps support the future of journalism.



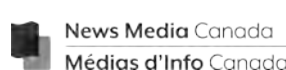
The Gaspé Spec
ESTABLISHED - MAY 1978

208-B Gérard D. Levesque
New Carlisle, Que.
G0C 1Z0

Tel: 418-752-5400
specs@globetrotter.net
thegaspespec.com

(Taxes included)
1-year (paper or digital): \$50
6-months (paper or digital): \$29
Outside Canada:
1-year paper to United States
\$175, International \$370

Published every **Wednesday** by:
Les Publications de la Côte Inc.
(Sea-Coast Publications Inc.)



Publisher:
Penny MacWhirter



News Editor:
Gilles Gagné



Circulation/Office Manager:
Holly Smith



Office Assistant:
Jillian O'Connell

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:
Elaine Sexton
Fred Kirch
Maria Chatterton
Hayden Sams,
Bonita Annett
Patricia Ste-Croix
Annett
Roger Wise

JOURNALISTS:
Nelson Sergerie
Cynthia Dow
Jeanie LeLacheur

SPEC welcomes letters to the editor on subjects relevant to topics covered by the paper. Letters must be kept within 300 words or less and may be edited for clarity or to remove any slanderous, sexist, racist or homophobic statements. We reserve the right to reject any letters. Opinions or letters published do not necessarily reflect the editorial policies or beliefs of this newspaper. All letters must bear the handwritten signature of the writer and include the address and number(s) for verification purposes (address & phone number will not be printed). The Publisher shall not be liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. The Publisher's liability for other errors or omissions in connection with any advertisement is strictly limited to publication of the advertisement in any



We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada.
We acknowledge special funding from the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications.

Partial collapse of New Richmond's municipal garage won't cause much of a delay

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW RICHMOND – The collapse of a section of New Richmond's new municipal garage on September 1 will have a minimal impact on the delivery of the new building scheduled for the end of December or early January 2025.

The incident occurred between 4:10 and 4:18 p.m. on a quiet Sunday afternoon during Labour Day weekend. The section that collapsed was the least advanced of the new building's three parts, stresses New Richmond Mayor Éric Dubé.

"Everybody around that area heard the sound of the collapse. A municipal employee was passing by when it collapsed. He quickly notified the municipal administration of the incident. I was there minutes after the call. It has become some kind of tourist attraction since Sunday (September 1). I have never seen so many people converging towards a municipal building," says Mr. Dubé. "The centre of the new building caved in. The front section, where the offices are located, was not damaged.



Photo: Éric Dubé

The trusses and studs fell shortly after 4 p.m. on the afternoon of September 1.

The back section, where our truck cleaning bays are located, were not affected either. The centre part was still open, without walls. Only the trusses, the studs and the door frames on the other (west) side were in place. There was no closed wall in the section that collapsed. That part will have to be completely rebuilt," described Mayor Dubé.

A wide array of engineers, inspectors, an architect, the general contractor LFG Con-

struction, and the truss manufacturer Léon Chouinard et Fils of Eel River Crossing, New Brunswick, converged on the construction site a day after the incident to investigate the cause of the collapse.

"The engineers are there. The general contractor will give us an update about what happened. The general contractor asked the engineering firm in charge of the plans and specifications. They were prepared by an independent engineer. The insurance company

is also there. Nothing moved much since the incident except that the contractor gave the authorization to cut some trusses because they were pulling on the part of the building that was standing," adds Éric Dubé.

As of September 5, he was expecting work to resume on September 9.

"If the causes of the incident are found by Friday (September 6), and suppose it was not a construction defect, everybody will go back to

work. They will only have lost a week of construction in that case. It can be recuperated between now and the December delivery date. It will be different if it was a conception defect," stresses Mayor Dubé.

The incident will not affect the budget project, which stands at \$5.6 million. The Town of New Richmond received a \$4,283,680 grant from Quebec's Department of Municipal Affairs for that venture.

"In the meantime, we stay functional in our old garage. The incident will not have a financial cost for the Town of New Richmond," says Éric Dubé.

The contract awarded to LFG Construction reached \$5,651,584; taxes included. By recovering 50% of Quebec's sales tax and 100% of the federal goods and services tax, the Town of New Richmond pays just under \$1 million for the garage.

The fact that the new garage structure is made of wood allowed the municipal administration to secure up to 83% in grants from the Quebec government in this venture.

A tourist season with ups and downs

NELSON SERGERIE

MONT-JOLI - According to preliminary data released by Tourisme Gaspésie in the Gaspé Peninsula, the 2024 summer tourist season fluctuated.

According to the organization, the season started strong, with a 10% increase in occupied units in June compared to the previous year, based on data from Tourisme Québec.

For July, occupancy rates are not yet available, but an internal survey conducted with accommodation establishments indicates a decrease in the proportion of establishments reporting near-full or full occupancy at the beginning of July and a slight decrease during the construction holidays compared to 2023.

The same survey shows an increase in the number of establishments reporting near-full or full occupancy during the first two weeks of August.

Additionally, reservations in the following weeks were higher than at the same time last year.

"There are weeks that are better than others. That's what's mind-blowing. Maybe the weather is proof of all that. All in all, it's a good tourist season," comments the director of Tourisme Gaspésie, Joëlle Ross. The inflationary context explains why people are travelling differently, an observation that was made last year and that seems to be becoming concrete.

"People are spending a little less, which is perhaps a little sad for our businesses," notes Ms. Ross.

Tourisme Gaspésie is investing \$150,000 for the fall to extend the tourist season.

"What we want is to extend the summer. People have understood that it's fun to come to Gaspésie in the fall if only to go hiking, go on sea excursions, and enjoy local



Photo: N. Sergerie

The 2024 tourist season should be comparable to last year.

products. I think that the Gaspésie is a commodity 12 months a year," says Ms. Ross.

No specific area stands out this year in terms of visitor

numbers.

"People are touring the Gaspésie less. They settle in one place and radiate around it. Maybe it's because, from year to year, they come back

to see other places. After all, we know very well that the Gaspé is immense," believes Ms. Ross.

November, December, and the period after, once there's a snowfall, remain difficult for the region 'tourism-wise'. In total, Tourisme Gaspésie has invested \$800,000 in the spring, summer, and fall 2024 campaign to attract visitors.

This represents an additional \$100,000 effort by the organization, which focuses part of its efforts on attracting tourists from the Lower Saint Lawrence and the Maritimes to the region, but also on convincing Gaspésians to visit their region. For the period from May to September 2023, the regional tourism association estimates that more than 600,000 people visited the Gaspé Peninsula, generating spinoffs estimated at \$379 million, compared to 570,000 visitors and spinoffs of \$340 million for the same period in 2022.

Chantier naval Forillon makes a major transaction

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - There has been a consolidation in Gaspé's marine industry with Chantier naval Forillon acquiring Entreprises maritimes Bouchard of Rivière-au-Renard.

"This is good news for Chantier Naval Forillon," says President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Jean-David Samuel.

The transaction, the value of which Mr. Samuel hasn't disclosed, was completed at the end of July following several months of discussions. The sale includes the shipyard buildings as well as the rolling stock. All jobs have been maintained.

"It was part of our strategic plan to acquire a new company to increase our production capacity along with our labour pool. It was a dream and it all has come to fruition," continues Mr. Samuel.

"For the future, we will continue to serve local fishing customers. We also want to diversify activities with private shipowners, and public companies such as the Société des traversiers du Québec, and take advantage of pillars two and three of the federal government's National Shipbuilding Strategy with recent announcements of several billion dollars for the construction of small vessels and the renovation of its fleet," says the President and CEO.

The transaction could represent a bold challenge given the ongoing crisis in the fishing sector.

"It's a cycle. We believe that, in a few years, it will come back. In between, there are a lot of boats to build, repair and renovate. We believe in it," he says.

The company employs about 90 workers in Gaspé and hopes to add 40 to 50 more in Rivière-au-Renard in the medium term. There were only seven employees in Rivière-au-Renard a few weeks ago and the shipbuilder currently has 18.

"We want to create jobs, in all types of trades. We will provide in-house training for people who do not necessarily have a trade. There is a new training program taking shape in Quebec with other shipyards," says Mr. Samuel.

Chantier naval Forillon considers itself a medium-sized shipyard in Quebec and is not afraid of becoming prey for major shipyards such as Groupe Océan, which acquired Chantier maritime Verreault in Les Méchins in 2022, or Davie in Lévis.

"We work together. We collaborate with other shipyards. The goal is not to become prey. There is enough market for all companies. Everyone can grow. We want to work together with Naval Québec, an association of suppliers, to reach out to the Canadian and even global market. Everyone gets their share of the pie and we are able to grow together, rather than against each other," says Mr. Samuel.

The manager believes production could increase by 30% in the short and medium term and 50% in the longer term.

The shipyard's order book is impressive: it includes the delivery of the eighth of 10 boats for the Canadian Coast Guard's search and rescue and a boat to be lengthened in Rivière-au-Renard.

There is also the new federal government fisheries research boat to build, a contract announced last October, and a boat under repair from Newfoundland and Labrador.

"And other contracts that we are currently working on," continues Mr. Samuel.

The federal government has awarded \$157 million in contracts to Forillon Shipyard to date, which has allowed it to reach a pivotal stage in its development.

"Above all, it has allowed us to have a long-term vision. Today, we can say that we are a large SME (Small Medium Enterprise): a team able to have long-term, innovation, continuous management, a



Photo: N. Sergerie

Jean-David Samuel, President and CEO of Chantier naval Forillon, indicated that the company has acquisition plans.

human resources department, project management, and finance. Instead of looking for contracts every six months, we have a long-term vision and be able to diversify and invest without always being on the brakes," analyzes the CEO.

The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Coast Guard and Member of Parliament for the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands, Diane Lebouthillier, visited Rivière-au-Renard to attend the transaction announcement.

She praised the Forillon Shipyard's ability to deliver the goods. "We have a long and fruitful collaboration.

Having spoken to senior officials, it is a security for them to work with Chantier naval Forillon, really take credit for it," says the federal elected official.

The inability to launch larger ships is a barrier to the development of the shipyard. "We are not necessarily looking at dry docks. We are always talking about lift equipment," he maintains, without closing the door on a distant future for this type of infrastructure.

The mayor of Gaspé, Daniel Côté, is happy with this announcement and this new perspective. "These successes on the initial site of the

shipyard founded by the eminent Michel Pouliot and propelled by Robert Côté, whom I saw earlier, these successes are now being transposed to Rivière-au-Renard, the maritime fisheries capital of Quebec, to give new impetus to this site set up by another eminent Gaspésian, Camille Bouchard," notes the mayor, adding that this transaction is positive given the ongoing shrimp and turbot crisis. -30-

The Rivière-au-Renard shipyard was bought from four fishermen, brothers Nicol, Bertrand and Richard Desbois, from Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé, as well as Mario Côté.



Friday, September 27th « 8 PM » Thursday, October 3rd

Ticket information: 418-392-4238 | WWW.SPECTACLESNEWRICHMOND.COM



Salle de spectacles régionale Desjardins de New Richmond



in association with



L'instinct de la croissance

Subscribe to Support Local Journalism!

Your contribution makes trustworthy reporting possible.



The Griffon Cultural Centre was destroyed by flames

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - The Centre Culturel Griffon was completely ravaged by flames early on September 1. The fire was reported around five o'clock and quickly spread throughout the building. News of the fire quickly spread on social media, where people received the news with great sadness.

"Tonight, the unthinkable happened," the Griffon Cultural Centre quickly wrote on its Facebook page. "Thank you all for your words of support. We promise you that we will not give up and that we will come back stronger than ever. To our entire team, to the people of the village, to the tourists, to all those who contributed to making the Cultural Centre what it was and what it will always remain, thank you. The Cultural Centre was more than the old cold storage warehouse, it was a community, a state of mind," added the centre's team.

The Centre Culturel Griffon was a cultural venue, a base for

artist Claude Côté, as well as a café and a Desjardins service point for the area.

On Saturday evening, a performance by Matiu, an Innu artist presenting folk music, took place.

According to the mayor of Gaspé, Daniel Côté, a smoker's item on the balcony is believed to have caused the fire following the performance.

Before becoming a cultural venue, the building was a former cold storage facility built in 1942, probably for the Pêcheurs-Unis cooperative founded in 1939, according to information from the Ministry of Culture.

It was used to store fresh fish and fishing bait. At a time when people did not yet have refrigerators, the citizens of L'Anse-au-Griffon could store their food there.

Abandoned in the early 1990s, the building was restored and renovated in the 2000s by a group of volunteers and the firm Vachon Roy of Gaspé to become the cultural centre.



The fire quickly spread throughout the entire building on Sunday morning.

Photos: N. Sergerie



The devastation once the fire was extinguished.

Highway 132 erosion: no decree until 2026 for action

NELSON SERGERIE

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - It will be 2026 before Quebec adopts a decree related to the Intervention Program for the Protection of Infrastructures Against Coastal Hazards by the Ministry of Transport (MTQ).

Studies have been underway since 2021 to protect, among other things, Highway 132 in the Gaspé Peninsula from erosion and coastal submersion.

Due to climate change, the ministry predicts that in Lower Saint Lawrence and the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands, 139 kilometres of roads will be vulnerable to erosion, and 176 kilometres will be susceptible to submersion.

In the project notice filed in July 2021, the ministry noted that recent events highlighted the need to ensure road user mobility and carry out preventive interventions.

The document estimated 273 vulnerable coastal sites in the long term.

The impact study which has been in progress for nearly three years, is expected to be submitted by the end of the summer, according to the Ministry of Transport, which will indicate when the document

will be available.

A series of procedures will follow before Quebec adopts the decree.

Thus, the documents admissibility must be reviewed by the Ministry of the Environment, the Fight against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks and the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE) will also examine the document.

Once these two steps have been completed, the report and recommendations will be analyzed by the government, and the Ministry of Transport expects the decree to be adopted in 2026.

Routine interventions by the ministry, such as repairs to retaining walls along Highway 132 on the north side of the Gaspé will continue normally. Every new project will have to be the subject of requests for different ministerial authorizations by the MTQ.

On the north side of the peninsula, specific issues related to the inhabited areas near rivers, access difficulties due to the topography with cliffs, high exposure of the coasts to winds and waves and the road's dependence are the main factors in the reflection.

On the south side, *mariculture exploitation, the concen-



Highway 132 battered near Manche-d'Épée during high winds

Photo: N. Sergerie

tration of salmon rivers and maintaining water access are highlighted in the planning. The impact study will allow for segmenting sites according to the vulnerability and the planning of the required work.

Once the decree is adopted, several steps will need to be completed for the new intervention sites.

The feasibility studies should take between four and 16 months, followed by design studies lasting 12 to 36 months, plans and specifications for 12 to 36 months and the construction.

With a decree adopted in

2026, the work for the new structures would, at best, only begin in 2028 or 2029.

Consultations are still underway for the vast project, which has been divided into four sub-regions: Lower Saint Lawrence, Northern Gaspé Peninsula, Southern Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands.

The link for submitting comments can be found on the ministry's website. In an interview in early 2023, the former territorial director of the Transport Ministry, Yves Berger, indicated that riverbank erosion would be the biggest trans-

portation issue in the Gaspé Peninsula over the next 25 years.

He indicated that this issue would require "major investments".

Projects are being prepared for both the northern and southern sides of the peninsula.

Mr. Berger indicated that in recent years, \$20 million has been invested to address climate change.

*mariculture - a type of farming in which fish or other sea animals and plants are kept or grown for food.

Who Doesn't Like a Little BLING?

MADELYN HAYES

NEW CARLISLE: - June 20 was a fun day at Family Ties. Participants gathered to take part in the second of eight workshops in the "Getting to Know You" program.

The session, titled "Beading and Braiding" was led by Tracy Lapointe, who shared her journey into jewellery making. Tracy's interest in the craft began when she was taking a French Immersion course through Adult Education and was given the opportunity to work in a shop in Bonaventure that sold beads, charms and everything you could imagine related to jewellery making. Not only did her French improve, the best part was their courses on how



Tracy Lapointe (left) shared her love of jewelry making with workshop participants.

Photo: Courtesy Family Ties

to create your own unique pieces. This job placement became a very unexpected

opportunity for Tracy and she soon found a new hobby which quickly became a pas-

sion. Tracy has since become skilled at repairing jewellery and transforming old or broken pieces into entirely new creations. She says she challenges herself to learn new things and says it's easy to get started. Kits can be ordered on Amazon and YouTube or Pinterest provides tutorials.

For the workshop, Tracy had all the necessary supplies for everyone to create their own unique, one-of-a-kind piece of jewellery. With her kind and soft-spoken guidance, each senior crafted their own beaded or braided creation. Participants were full of praise, commenting that the workshop more than met their expectations, that she (Tracy) was very pleasant and helpful; good snacks,

good company; a truly lovely way to spend an afternoon.

If you visit a Bazaar or Market, keep an eye out for Tracy, as she often showcases her wonderful creations there.

Family Ties is able to offer the "Getting to know you" workshops with support from the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors program.

Family Ties summer students, Kylie Walters and Cheyenne Renouf, were on hand to assist throughout the day.

After enjoying a delicious snack, each participant was able to choose a pair of Tracy's handmade earrings to take home. After all, Who doesn't like a little Bling?

Christmas in July at Family Ties

MADELYN HAYES

NEW CARLISLE: A Christmas tree, decorations, music, gifts and more were all part of the July 16 workshop at Family Ties.

Wendy Syvret, the day's presenter, kicked off the event by sharing a bit about herself. Though she currently lives in Calgary, Wendy has a deep-rooted connection to the coast and has been visiting the coast since her childhood.

With a collection of 12 sewing machines (and still collecting), Wendy's love for sewing has been a lifelong passion, starting at the age of three. Over the years, she's channelled this passion into creating items with the "purpose of giving" to those in need. Workshop participants were impressed and amazed at all the different items Wendy has sewn over the years. Everything from baby clothes to blankets, costumes, dog

beds, dog coats and so much more. Wendy says, "I love using my hands to create," and mentioned her other creative pursuits, including knitting, macrame and ceramics, to name a few. Many participants commented how talented Wendy is and how her kindness is so inspiring.

Wendy took time to explain how she makes her mittens and she was willing to provide the pattern to anyone who might want to try it on their own. Everyone in attendance received a pair of Wendy's beautiful, warm and cozy mittens to take home.

Continuing with the Christmas theme, participants created a snowman ornament using beach glass. Their unique, one-of-a-kind ornaments is something they can enjoy for years to come.

Despite the hot afternoon, the atmosphere was kept festive with a refreshing punch as well as tea, coffee and Christmas style snacks. Family Ties summer students, Kylie Walters and Cheyenne Renouf, were on hand to assist wherever needed.



Wendy Syvret has been sewing since she was three years old.

Photos: Courtesy Family Ties



Attendees shared positive feedback about the afternoon calling it a great time spent with friends, old and new, with many loving the Christmas theme and the relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere.

Family Ties offers these "Getting to know you" work-

shops with support from the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors program.

If you are interested in participating in these monthly activities, keep an eye on future issues of The Gaspé Spec or the Family Ties facebook page.



WELDING AND FITTING

COURSE STARTS JANUARY 2025

Do you:

- Have good shape perception?
- Enjoy physical and manual tasks?
- Have good visual acuity, dexterity and good execution precision?
- Have excellent powers of observation?

If so, WELDING is for you!



SCAN ME

Register
by January 2025

100%
placement rate

FREE
residence



Take Me Out To The Ball Game...

JILLIAN O'CONNELL

NEW CARLISLE: - On Saturday, August 31, the New Carlisle ballpark hosted their second annual softball fundraiser. Six teams came together for laughs and community fun. The teams consisted of the Lady Royals, the Lady Cartels, the Rookies, the Fire Department, Sûreté du Québec and the Paramédics.

"In 2023, a simple idea to arrange a game between the Lady Royals and the Fire De-

partment came about, and once the Fire Department had been notified, they became enthusiastic about the idea. Both teams had one goal in mind, and that was to come together and create hilarious moments and entertain the locals," says organizer Shannon Marsh.

Ms. Marsh adds, "The idea quickly took off. Sabrina Savage, captain of the Rookies, showed interest and suggested involving her husband's police colleagues. Their eagerness led to the inclusion and the

event was set. The lineup that made the event possible was the Lady Royals, the Rookies, the Fire Department and Sûreté du Québec." Two bonus games were added and played by the Crick Crack Crock, the Royal Blues and the Devils.

Following the success of the 2023 fundraiser, organizers reached out to other teams, adding the Lady Cartels and

the Paramédics to the lineup, making the 2024 fundraiser even larger.

Organizers held a 50/50 draw and had a bar service, raising \$1,500 during the event, which will be donated to Collectif Alimentaire, a local food bank in Paspébiac. In 2023, the funds were donated to the CAB (Centre D'Action Benevole) in Paspébiac.

The costs of umpires, equipment and other necessities were covered by the registration fees paid by the teams.

The event has become an annual tradition, with hopes of continued growth and community engagement. This annual event not only provides entertainment but will also help support important local causes.



An awesome swing by Rebecca Renouf.



The Rookies won the final game of the night.

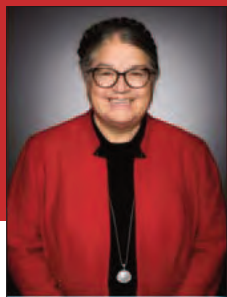


Madison Flowers of the Lady Royals slides into third base.



The Fire Department took first place for the second year.

Photos: J. O'Connell



DIANE LEBOUTHILLIER

MP • Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine

Serving the English-speaking community of our beautiful region!

Grande-Rivière office
418 385-4264

Magdalen Islands office
418 986-1489

Sainte-Anne-des-Monts office
418 764-2890

New Richmond office
581 355-0060

Email: diane.lebouthillier@parl.gc.ca

diane

AXIO
ARPEUTEURS - GEOMETRES

AXIO
arpenteurs-géomètres inc.
land surveyors

1518, Avenue de Grand-Pré, Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0

Alexandre Babin, Arpenteur-géomètre
C abag@axioag.com

Guillaume Lapierre, Arpenteur-géomètre
C glag@axioag.com

Membre de l'Ordre
des Arpenteurs-Géomètres du Québec

418 534-3113 / info@axioag.com
axioag.com

LFG
CONSTRUCTION

PROUD PARTNER IN
YOUR CONSTRUCTION
PROJECTS FOR
MORE THAN
45 YEARS!

constructionlfg.com

Gaspésie-Les Îles | Côte-Nord | Bas-Saint-Laurent

BUILDINGS

ENERGY AND CIVIL ENGINEERING

INDUSTRIAL MECHANIC

T 418-364-7082 / 1-844-664-7082

ENERGY
TRANSPORTATION GROUP

WHAT MAKES US
DRIVEN TO BE DIFFERENT?



www.shipENERGY.com

DISCOVER MORE

Gaspé: First step in reconfiguring York Boulevard West in the Sunny Bank sector

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - The Quebec Ministry of Transport (MTQ) has issued a call for tenders for the redevelopment of York Boulevard West in the Sunny Bank sector of Gaspé.

The ministry wants to carry out the first step, which is the environmental impact study of the project, necessary to rebuild the road. In June 2022, the Sunny Bank Flood Committee won a class action against the Ministry of Transport (MTQ) and the court ordered it to carry out corrective work to maintain an adequate level of service for a flow of 600 cubic metres/second over the next six years and to build a river flow measuring station within two years.

The ministry had already committed during the proceedings to undertake about \$8 million in roadwork to improve the situation within six years.

In a project notice filed with the Ministry of the Environment, the Fight against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks for the "Redevelopment of York Boulevard West in the Sunny Bank sector in Gaspé" last fall, the MTQ detailed each of the upcoming steps for the construction site.

The ministry is aiming, in particular, to replace the bridge currently characterized by an opening of 11 metres by a bridge with a 60-metre opening as well as to dig and widen a secondary arm of the York River over 200 metres long and 54 metres wide upstream of the planned bridge.

In addition, the road em-

bankments will be widened over 300 metres where there is a hydric environment due to the road being raised by 0.5 metres, and the ditch will be reprofiled over 400 metres along the eastern side of the Sunny Bank Street intersection.

A 70-metre long ditch and the construction of a new six-metre wide culvert are also in the plans, along with the replacement of four other culverts.

In its notice, the MTQ also proposes three other solutions as part of the impact study. The first option is the complete removal of all road embankments and the relocation of the road four kilometres upstream in a less dynamic part of the York River.

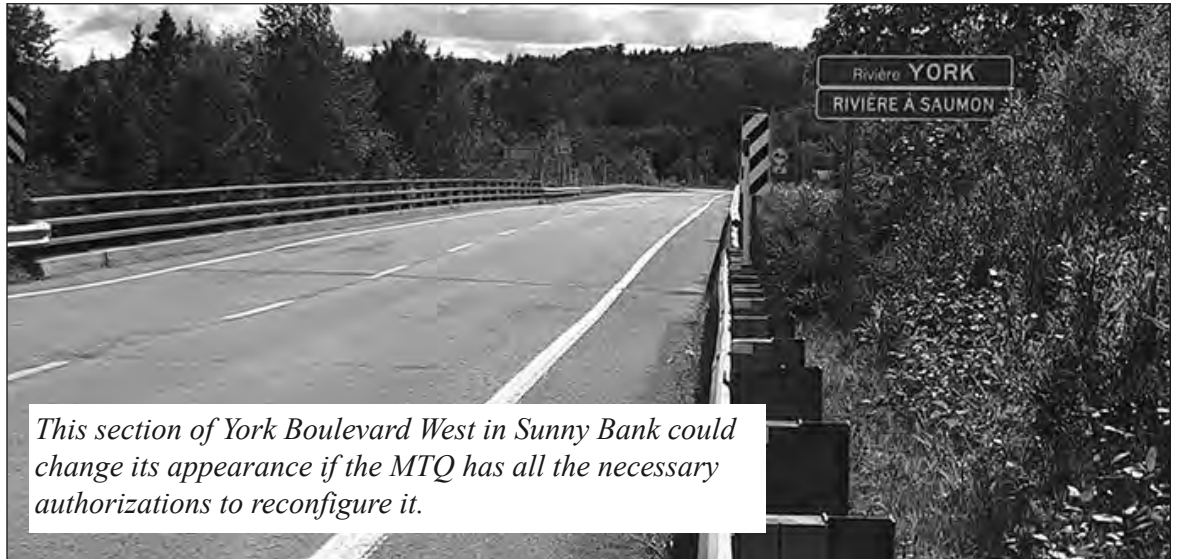
The second option is the complete removal of all road embankments and the construction of a multi-span bridge.

The last scenario, which could have a considerable impact, involves expropriating all residents in the flood zone.

According to the preliminary project schedule, the environmental impact study, a BAPE review, and obtaining the environmental decree should be completed by the fall of 2027.

In the preliminary project schedule, the environmental impact study, a BAPE and the environmental decree should be completed by fall 2027, with the environmental impact study being the first milestone in the process.

The pre-project study, concomitant with the environmental impact assessment, is scheduled for completion in



This section of York Boulevard West in Sunny Bank could change its appearance if the MTQ has all the necessary authorizations to reconfigure it.

Photos: N. Sergerie

spring 2028.

The final preliminary design study is expected to be completed by spring 2029.

This will be followed by plans and specifications to vacate the rights-of-way between spring 2029 and spring 2032, with final authorizations to be obtained in spring 2033.

The tendering and awarding of the contract will take place in spring 2033 for construction slated for summer 2033 and fall 2034.

The Ministry is not ruling out the possibility of complet-

ing the project by 2035.

Between the judgment rendered in June 2022 and the final work schedule, at least 12 years will elapse.

The road, rebuilt in 1977 which connects the Sunny Bank and Wakeham sectors, slows the flow of the York River.

Previously, it was a road at water level and, during floods, the river would overflow onto the roadway.

Raised by 1.5 metres in 1952, it was noted that the road partially blocked the river's

flow.

In 1977, the road was raised by two metres, making water evaluation even more difficult. The 2010 flood was the straw that broke the camel's back. From December 13 to 15, 2010, approximately 246 millimetres of rain fell on Gaspé. Residents filed their lawsuit in 2013 and the court authorized it in 2015.

Since its reconstruction in 1977, floods have occurred in 1977, 1980, twice in 1981, 1983, 1997, 1998, 2004, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2017.



The old road is still visible from the new road built in 1977.

Transports Québec sticks to the December railway deadline

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE – Quebec's Ministry of Transport maintains that the refurbishment of the railway between New Richmond and Port Daniel will be completed in December, despite several incomplete works along the route.

A major retaining wall located east of the Port Daniel tunnel has been progressing slowly, and three retaining walls along the New Carlisle to Paspebiac railroad stretch passing along the Bay of Chaleur, remains incomplete. A fourth wall in the same area has been completed.

The three uncompleted New Carlisle-Paspebiac retaining walls are also the subject of discussions between Transports Québec and the general contractor in charge of the works, Pomerleau, regarding their design.

"The section between Caplan and Port-Daniel-Gascons is still scheduled to be put into service in 2024. All possible efforts are being made to achieve it. The Ministry has experienced some delays on some of its construction sites, however, at present, there is no indication that the track will not be ready by the end of the year," says Jean-Philippe Langlais, Trans-

ports Québec's spokesperson.

New Richmond construction site ignored by Transports Québec

The SPEC informed Mr. Langlais that despite his mention of Caplan suggesting that the line is entirely repaired between Matapedia and Caplan, a major construction site remains to be completed in New Richmond where the track is moved north over a length of 300 metres, under an \$8.4 million contract.

Mr. Langlais is not the first spokesperson from Transports Québec to use Caplan as the

easternmost point where the line is supposedly in service, even though trains cannot go further east than the Black Cape part of New Richmond. Mr. Langlais, like Nicolas Vigneault, another ministry spokesperson before him, ignored SPEC's question about the fact that trains have not reached Caplan since November 2023.

Questioned about a possible legal recourse initiated by Pomerleau because of a possible misconception of the plans and specifications of the work to be carried out in New Carlisle and Paspebiac, Jean-Philippe Langlais pointed out

that "the Ministry does not comment on any contractual clauses that it holds with its contractors. There are currently no legal cases related to any contractor involved in the project."

The SPEC also asked Mr. Langlais if the New Carlisle station and yard will be available to trains before December, considering that both are located west of the New Carlisle-Paspebiac track section upgraded by Pomerleau, and he also ignored the question.

The major retaining wall under construction in Port

Cont'd on page 11

Town of Gaspé is close to dropping housing developer

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - The Town of Gaspé is issuing a serious warning to the developer Logements CVP regarding the construction of 144 apartments near Carrefour Gaspé, as announced in September 2021.

"The municipal council tells me that the elastic is stretched to the limit. We were supposed to have a working meeting today (September 3) on this subject that unfortunately did not take place. The council is starting to get exasperated. The land has been acquired for three years," explains Mayor Daniel Côté. According to the elected official, there have been changes in the developer's partners.

The mayor is hoping to have a quick follow-up. "We have no choice but to put pressure back on. We had applied pressure by giving notice of the exercise of our termination clause, which allowed us to take possession and full ownership of the land we had ceded," Mr. Côté mentioned.

The elected official hopes for a positive, credible and solid response by mid-September.

"Not a day goes by without citizens or developers contacting us. We are concerned and we hope to see progress on the file. There will be a meeting – I hope – within the next two weeks, that this will be resolved and that buildings will be raised," the mayor adds.

"It is not the Town that is delaying the process. We have placed a lot of hope in this project. We still hope that this project will be carried out, but our patience has reached its limits," the elected official clearly stated.

In February, the Town of Gaspé had already mentioned its intention to exercise its termination clause. A termination clause is a contractual mechanism that allows for sanctions for a party's failure to meet its contractual obligations, by providing that the contract will be terminated at the fault of the party that has failed to respect its commitments.

In September 2021, Logements CVP purchased the municipal land for \$300,000, when its assessment at the time was \$566,000, to create Le Domaine de la Baie.

The investors also deposited a \$266,000 security deposit, repayable in four installments each time a complex was built.



Photos: N. Sergerie

With the exception of a few site preparations, the location designated for 144 housing units has remained virtually unchanged since 2021.

The project includes four buildings with 36 units each, to be built at a rate of one building per year until 2026. CVP had promised to start construction on December 31, 2023. In fact, the first foundation was to be poured by that date, which did not happen.

The project ran into technical issues due to the steeper-than-expected slope, which forced the developer to go back to the drawing board, erasing hopes of starting construction as early as 2022.

The pandemic also caused delays for materials, shifting the construction start date to the original plan of 2023.

Initially estimated at \$25 million, the project could now reach over \$40 million in its current form.

The announcement had been made with great fanfare, and the project was presented as the largest real estate development in Gaspé in 50 years.

The site offers an exceptional view of Gaspé Bay, is close to a shopping centre, and is less than five minutes from the heart of downtown and an equivalent distance from the LM Wind Power blade plant.

144 housing units: Developer responds to Gaspé's ultimatum

The developer Logements CVP, which plans to build 144 housing units near Carrefour Gaspé, attributes the delay in the project to the Town of Gaspé.

On September 3, Gaspé issued a serious warning, demanding that the project announced in September 2021 be completed.

The mayor said the town council was getting frustrated by the slow pace of development.

"We are really disappointed with what is happening with the Town of Gaspé. They are threatening us. I have been asking for a meeting with the council for over six months to explain that the constraints put in place by the town are too restrictive," says one of the administrators, Allyson Cahill-Vibert.

The potential land reclamation included in the contract is the element that causes problems.

"It's really restrictive for us from the point of view of financial institutions. We're taking enormous risks," she says, bringing up the initial dispute with the Ministry of Natural Resources to complete the transaction. "There was a clause with the Environment (ministry). The town couldn't sell it to us. We lost a year right there. We changed our plans several times to adapt them with the town. We have to connect to a pumping station that still doesn't exist. The CPE (Centre de la petite enfance) was imposed on us. We tried to work with them. We wasted a lot of time and energy with the Ministry of Families and the CPE to give them a head start on the ground so as not to lose 80 daycare spaces. We're working very hard. Our plans are made," notes Ms. Cahill-Vibert.

The developer is looking for a contractor to move the file forward as well as a new partner. "But as long as the Town of Gaspé leaves clauses such as the repossession of the land in their favour or the performance bond penalties, we cannot move forward, we are

blocked," she continues.

Furthermore, the nearby project of 80 affordable housing units is pulling the rug out from under their feet.

"We were supposed to collaborate with the Town of Gaspé and not work in opposite directions," she says.

In the event that the Town carries out its threat, the developer is reserving its options. "If the Town takes back the land from us, we will analyze all the options on our side," warns Ms. Cahill-Vibert, who indicates that she could build apartments elsewhere in the Gaspé Peninsula.



Allyson Cahill-Vibert

RAILWAY:

Cont'd from page 10

Daniel goes weeks without being worked on, as noted by SPEC in August. The contractor in that area has primarily been working on the tunnel recently. Explanations regarding this part of the railroad were also ignored by Transports Québec.

The president of the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie, Éric Dubé, recently asked questions to Transports Québec about the possibility of a delay in the delivery of the railroad between New Richmond and Port Daniel before the end of 2024.

"I am waiting for answers from Transports Québec. I also asked questions about the Black Cape situation, where the track is moved," says Mr. Dubé.

As a company under the control of the MRCs of Avignon, Bonaventure, Rocher-Percé and Côte-de-Gaspé, the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie (SCFG) needs to know when freight service will resume east of New Richmond for operational reasons, says Éric Dubé. Once the line is operational to Port Daniel, where its most



Photos: Anthony Bernard Prince

Three of the retaining walls along the New Carlisle to Paspébiac shoreline still require significant work before completion.

important source of revenues, Saint Mary's Cement, is located, the SCFG will operate trains over 125 miles of track instead of 70.

Currently, the SCFG loses important traffic because cement must be transferred from trucks to railcars in New Richmond due to the line not servicing the cement plant directly.

The transshipment step often favours trucks, because the cost attached to it makes the railway less advantageous,

especially over short distances. Some of the Port Daniel input will also come to Port Daniel by rail once the cement plant has direct access to trains.

The rail yard near the cement plant is under construction and is expected to be completed in just days or a few weeks.

The entire upgrade of the railway between Matapédia and Gaspé is being carried out for \$872 million.

Announcements



Obituaries



DOWNING: Mary (née Campbell)

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our dear Mary on Saturday, August 31, 2024, at Lakeridge Gardens, Ajax at the age of 90.

Beloved mother of Thomas (Maria). Treasured Gramma of Richard (April), Steven (Andria) and Michelle (Danton); Great-Gramma of Rhett, Oaklynn and Steven Jr.

She was predeceased by her parents Weston and Phoebe Campbell; brothers Edwin "Burns", Roy, David and her twin William. A special thank you to the staff at Lakeridge Hospital, Ajax and Lakeridge Gardens LTC, 5 East for their compassionate care and support.

Visitation was held at the Pine Hills Funeral Centre, 625 Birchmount Road, Scarborough on Monday, September 9, 2024, from 2 to 4 and 6 to 8 p.m. A Funeral Service was celebrated at the funeral centre on Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at 10 a.m., with visitation one hour prior. Interment followed in Pine Hills Cemetery. Family and friends were invited back to the funeral centre for refreshments after the graveside service.

For online condolences, please visit: <https://mountpleasantgroup.permavita.com/>

[site/MaryDowning.html](https://www.mountpleasantgroup.com/site/MaryDowning.html)

If desired, donations can be made to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, Canadian Cancer Society or Cystic Fibrosis Canada. The family will be participating in the CIBC – Run for the Cure, a charity Mary held dear to her heart. If you wish, you can make a donation to support their team, "Big Gs Crew" at: Durham Region: Michelle Downing - CIBC Run for the Cure ([cancer.ca](https://support.cancer.ca/site/TR/RunfortheCure/RFTC_NW_odd_?px=14858481&pg=personal&fr_id=29870)) https://support.cancer.ca/site/TR/RunfortheCure/RFTC_NW_odd_?px=14858481&pg=personal&fr_id=29870



MCDONALD: Brian

A devoted husband, father, and friend, passed away peacefully on August 27, 2024, at the age of 85. Born on April 30, 1939, in Douglastown, Brian led a life marked with kindness, generosity, humility, and unwavering dedication to his family and community.

Brian's greatest joy came from his family. He was the loving husband to Norma, with whom he shared near 70 wonderful years. They would have celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on September 5 this year.

He was the cherished father to the twins, Velma and Vera, Valerie, Shelly, Una, and his boys, Shawn and Jason. He loved being a grandfather, "Pappy," to 12 and great-grandfather to three.

He will be greatly missed by his children



and grandchildren, along with their partners, as well as his sisters Colleen and Myrna and his many in-laws, nieces and nephews.

A man of simple means, Brian found fulfillment in the everyday moments, whether it be cutting his firewood, planting potatoes or opening the back road after a snowstorm. He always worked diligently and was known for his tireless efforts and strong work ethic. His 30 plus years working at the road department culminated into so many great friendships and stories.

Brian also dedicated himself to his community, offering his help to those in need without ever seeking recognition, and was active in the upkeep and running of his parish church for many years. His quiet acts of service, gentle nature, and willingness to lend a hand were hallmarks of a life well-lived. He made a lasting impact on everyone fortunate enough to know him.

Visitation and a funeral mass will be held starting at 1 p.m. on Saturday, October 12, 2024, at St. Patrick's Church in Douglastown, followed by a reception.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Brian's memory to St. Patrick's Church as a reflection of his spirit of giving and community support.

**Four Generations
of Monument Craftsmen**

HIGHEST QUALITY - BEST PRICES

MONUMENTS, MARKERS, CEMETERY LETTERING,
LASER DESIGNS AND PORTRAITS

SALES REP:

Steven Imhoff 418-752-6041
581-233-2101

Covering Port Daniel to New Richmond

Your Region.
Your Paper.

If It Matters To You, It Matters To Us.

Subscribe today



Name: _____

Address: _____

Your gift Message: _____

1 year: Canada \$50 6 months: \$29

Mail your form along with your cheque or money order to:

The Gaspé Spec
208-B Gérard D. Levesque Blvd,
New Carlisle, Quebec, G0C 1Z0

Call with your credit card at 418-752-5400 or
order online at thegaspespec.com

Name: _____

Address: _____

Your gift Message: _____

1 year: Canada \$50 6 months: \$29

Announcements



In Memory

FLOWERS: Elmer Clyde

In loving memory of a precious father who passed away September 5, 2018.

*Dad never looked for praises,
He was never one to boast;
He just went on quietly working,
For the ones he loved most.
His dreams were seldom spoken,
His wants were very few;
And most of his worries,
Went unspoken too.
He was there, a firm foundation,
Through all our storms of life;
A sturdy hand to hold on to,
In times of stress and strife.
A true friend we could turn to,
When times were good or bad;
One of our greatest blessings,
The man we called Dad.
Our dad was the the best,
He is our guardian angel;
He may be gone from our sight,
But he is always in our hearts.*

With all our love, daughter Carol and son-in-law Richard.

FLOWERS: Lloyd Elmer

In loving memory of a dear brother who left us suddenly September 5, 1979, as the result of a car accident.

*Although we smile
And make no fuss;*

*No one misses you more than us.
And when old times we oft recall;
That's when we miss you most of all.
It is only a little that means a lot;
To say, dear bro, we have not forgotten.
Our brother was the best,
He is our guardian angel;
He may be gone from our sight,
But he is always in our hearts.*

With all our love, sister Carol and brother-in-law Richard.



O'CONNELL: LAURENCE

September 17, 1939 – September 13, 2013

In loving memory of a dear husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather who passed away 11 years ago on September 13, 2013.

*Our lives go on without you,
But nothing is the same.*

*We must hide our heartache,
When someone speaks your name.
Sad are the hearts that love you,
Silent are the tears that fall.
You did so many things for us,
Your heart was so kind and true.
And when we needed someone,
We could always count on you.
Living without you is the hardest part,
but with the love in our hearts,
you will walk with us forever.*

Forever loved and sadly missed by your wife, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

SIMON: Courtney

In loving memory of a dear father, father-in-law, grandfather and great-grandfather who passed away September 21, 2002.

*When twilight hour draws near,
And sunset frames the sky,
We think of you dear dad,
And the happy days gone by.
Thoughts of you come drifting back,
Within our dreams to stay.
To know that you are resting,
When twilight ends the day.*

Forever in our hearts and deeply missed by Eleanor (Clayton), Garfield (Sandra), Carolyn, Donald (Frank) and families.

*Deadline to submit an announcement
is Wednesday at 4 p.m.*

Obituary - under 150 words (\$50), 150-250 words (\$55)
250+ words (quote will be provided)

In Memory: under 150 words (\$35), 150-250 words (\$45)

Funeral, Celebration of Life, Card of Thanks, Engagement, Birth, Prayer, Birthday (\$35)

Wedding (\$55)

All photos are an additional \$10



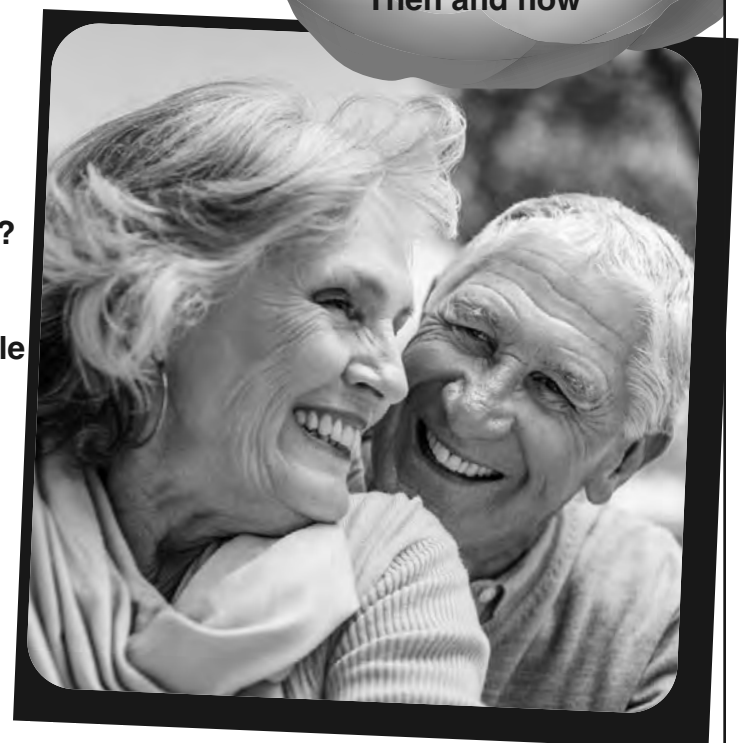
SPREAD THE joy

Publish your
ANNIVERSARY ANNOUNCEMENT
in The Gaspé Spec

What is the date of the anniversary?
How long have you been married?

Share details such as who the couple is and where they are from.

Would you like a sample announcement/template?
Reach out to us on facebook (The Gaspé Spec) or at specs@globetrotter.net and we'll provide you with a sample.



\$45

1 Photo included

\$50

2 photos:
Then and now

Send your announcement to specs@globetrotter.net, inbox The Gaspé Spec on Facebook, visit thegaspespec.com or mail to 208B Gérard D. Levesque, New Carlisle, QC, G0C 1Z0

BARACHOIS:

The Gaspé Cancer Foundation
November 2: A ticket draw and luncheon will be held at the Barachois Legion from 11:15 a.m. to 1 p.m. Soup, sandwiches, hotdogs, desserts, tea and coffee will be available. Donations at the door.

YORK:

York River Senior Citizens Club
October 27: The York River Senior Citizens Club will be holding their Annual Harvest Supper at York River Community Hall, 702 York Blvd. West. The cost is \$15 per person. Takeouts will be available between 4 p.m. and 4:45 p.m. The first sitting is at 5 p.m., with a second sitting at 6 p.m. Everyone welcome.

MALBAY:

Harvest Supper
October 5: The Malbay harvest supper will begin at 5 p.m. tickets will be available after September 14.

HOPE TOWN:

Sports Club
September 15: 21st Annual Terry Fox Walk. Registration starts at 12:30 p.m. and the walk begins at 1 p.m.
September 28: A Gift bingo will be held at the Hope Town Community Centre starting at 7 p.m.
November 30: A Christmas gift bingo will be held at the Hope Town Community Centre starting at 7 p.m.

HOPE:

Hope Baptist Church
Sundays: Sunday School starting at 10 a.m. Worship service beginning at 11 a.m.

NEW CARLISLE:

New Carlisle Legion
Mondays: Mini bingo beginning at 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Line Dancing beginning at 7:30 p.m.
Every Friday: Open at 7:30 p.m. drop in to play pool, shuffleboard, etc.
September 14: Nash Stanley with Amanda Renouf beginning at 9 p.m.

September 18: Shuffleboard beginning at 4 p.m.

October 1: Monthly meetings will be starting again at 6 p.m. and will be the first Tuesday of every month.

October 5: Gift bingo starting at 7 p.m.

October 26: Halloween dance with DJ Ash at 9 p.m.

NEW CARLISLE: Bible Chapel Meetings

Sundays: Breaking of Bread for believers - 9:30 a.m., Gospel meeting and Sunday School - 2 p.m.

Thursdays: Prayer Meeting and Bible Study - 7 p.m. Everyone welcome! For more information: 418-752-3372 or 418-752-6011.

NEW RICHMOND:

St. Andrew's United Church

October 19: Starting at 4 p.m. there will be a "Teaspoon night." It will be an evening of tasting, chatting and laughing. The best dishes in the "soup, meat, vegetables and Pudding" categories can choose a prize from the white elephant table in the basement.

November 30: Come join us between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. in our "Coffee shop with music and storytelling." Coffee, tea and sweets will be provided, as we listen to music and share stories of our memories of St. Andrew's throughout the years.

December 1: A celebration with Holy Communion will take place. All our partners who helped us throughout the years are invited to the service, following the service will be a luncheon in the hall.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES: 50+ Club

Tuesdays: Grocery bingo every Tuesday at 7 p.m. \$10 for three cards. Extra cards are \$1 each.

September 21: Harvest Bingo starting at 1 p.m. doors open at noon, everyone is welcome.

UNITED CHURCH NEW RICHMOND

September 15

10 a.m. Service

September 22

10 a.m. Service

UNITED CHURCH HOPE TOWN

September 15

No Service

September 22

2 p.m. Service

PARISH OF GASPÉ

September 15

St. James - Wakeham

9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

September 22

St. Matthew's Peninsula

9 a.m. Service with Reserved Sacrament

Every Wednesday

No Morning Prayer for the Month of September



Business & Professional DIRECTORY

Grenier, Grenier & Grenier
LAWYERS



Réal Grenier, b.a.ll.l.
Jules Grenier, b.a.ll.l.

96 Gérard D. Levesque Blvd, P.O. Box 519
New Carlisle (Quebec) G0C 1Z0
Tel.: (418) 752-3308 • Fax (418) 752-6935

To reach the anglophone population of the Gaspé Peninsula, advertise in
The Gaspé Spec!
418-752-5400
specs@globetrotter.net

GAËL TREMBLAY
Notary and legal counsel

TREMBLAY & BARRIAULT, NOTAIRES INC.
119B Perron Blvd West
New Richmond, (Québec) G0C 2B0
Tel.: (418) 392-5282
Fax: (418) 392-6155
E-mail: gaultremblay@notarius.net



FULLY BILINGUAL SERVICE

Forage Moreau Inc.
418-392-9501

Mathieu Mercier - Driller/Owner

- Artesian Well Drilling
- Budgetary Price
- Bilingual Service
- RBQ: 5672-1467-01

foragemoreaumercier@gmail.com

OHMEGA
Going beyond and reliable since 1982



Electricity - Plumbing
Automation
Industrial computing
Counter sales

3 Rue Cerisiers
Gaspé, Québec G4X 2M1
Tel. (418) 368-5425
Fax (418) 368-7290
www.groupeohmega.com



Dr. Pascal Cyr
Optometrist



Dr. Stacey Starrak
Optometrist

CLINIQUE D'OPTOMÉTRIE L'ÉMERILLON

LENSES CRAFTED ON THE PREMISES

PASPÉBIAC: 104 Gérard D. Levesque Blvd West • 418-752-5553

CHANDLER: 260 René Lévesque Blvd East • 418-689-5553

MARIA: 435 Perron Blvd West • 418-759-5553

BILINGUAL SERVICE

MEMBER OF

Canada's Largest Network of Optometrists

HOROSCOPES

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

A disagreement may have you questioning a relationship this week, Aries. Do not get ahead of yourself, as you'll figure out that the turmoil will subside soon enough.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

Group activities or time spent with a significant other may not go as well as usual this week, Taurus. With your mind elsewhere, it's hard to focus on having fun and others will catch on.

GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21

Do not believe everything you hear this week, Gemini. There are a lot of rumors floating around, and only a portion of what is being said is accurate. Get the facts first.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22

Cancer, you are usually outgoing and easygoing, but this week you may be feeling more reserved and shy. Are you missing someone? If so, get in touch and you'll feel more like yourself.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23

Friends or family members may be making more demands on your time, Leo. You want to go along with it, but be careful not to stretch yourself too thin.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, someone close to you might be feeling under the weather and could use a little extra support right now. Perhaps you can make soup or drop in for a visit to cheer this person up?

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Seek out quiet spots right now, Libra, as lately your life has been a bit of a whirlwind. Change is good, but so much change at one time can be exhausting.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, take a step back from all of your responsibilities. Things will not go haywire if you take a break for a few days or even a week. You can commit fully again after some rest.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

There's no point getting into an argument over a situation beyond your control, Sagittarius. Instead, wait until the time is right to express your thoughts and work out a solution.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Capricorn, even though you may want to expand your friend network right now, you aren't sure how to begin. Social media can connect you with those nearby.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

It is a good idea for you to have set deadlines for your goals, Aquarius; otherwise, you may keep putting things off. With dates on paper, you can check things as they get done.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Pisces, you want to return to a relationship right where you left off, but the other person may not be on the same page right now. Give it a little more time.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

- SEPTEMBER 11 Taraji P. Henson, Actress (54)
- SEPTEMBER 12 Jennifer Hudson, Singer (43)
- SEPTEMBER 13 Tyler Perry, Filmmaker (55)
- SEPTEMBER 14 Andrew Lincoln, Actor (51)
- SEPTEMBER 15 Tom Hardy, Actor (47)
- SEPTEMBER 16 Alexis Bledel, Actress (43)
- SEPTEMBER 17 Patrick Mahomes, Athlete (29)



Therese Gallant, Elmina Wedge, and Alice Jane Paquet present a cheque to Lori Munro, for the Source Alimentaire Bonavignon.

Grand Cascapedia Branch of the WI celebrates 72 years of service

Alice Campbell-Dell

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES: - The Grand Cascapedia Branch of the Quebec Women's Institute is celebrating its 72 years of service in the community this year. The branch has 16 active members.

The Women's Institute movement, whose motto is "For Home and Country", was established as a community based organization for women in Stoney Creek, Ontario, in 1897 by Adelaide Hoodless. From Canada, the organization spread back to the United Kingdom and throughout the Commonwealth and now has over 9 million members in over 70 countries. Our most famous member, Queen Elizabeth II, was active in the Sandringham WI from 1943 until she died in 2022.

The organization was originally founded as a means by which to empower and educate rural women and allow them, collectively, to do good in the community. The organization still provides women with regular opportunities to gather, socialize and learn together, and to undertake projects to support literacy, education and agriculture, as well as to provide service and support wherever there is a need.

The Grand Cascapedia Women's Institute

remains active in many ways. Annually, they offer two scholarships to graduating students, as well as book awards (For the Love of Reading) to students in Pre-K through to Grade 11 attending New Richmond High School. They participate in the Women's Institute provincial writing competition and invite students from all regional schools to submit entries. The WI awards prizes at the regional level and distributes provincial awards at end-of-year ceremonies in the schools. The Cascapedia branch hosts a Valentine's Day Party for the seniors in residence at the New Richmond Manor. They also volunteer to serve meals at local events and serve lunches at CASA's Senior Wellness Days in Cascapedia-St. Jules. The group also provides financial support to several local charities and organizations including the local food bank, the local women's shelter, the L.I.F.E. Association, and the New Richmond Agricultural Association, and have provided financial support to individuals and families in crisis.

In an age when volunteerism is in serious decline, the intrepid ladies of the Grand Cascapedia Women's Institute continue to donate their time, talents, energy, and resources to support the community.

What's this CHALLENGE

Do you have an antique tool or gadget that you're not sure of its purpose? Send SPEC a photo and let our subscribers help you solve the mystery.
specs@globetrotter.net

The gadget in last week's issue is called a pry-a-lid. It is used to remove mason jar lids without damaging them. Interestingly enough, with the surge in home-steading, many companies are producing modern versions of the pry-a-lid.



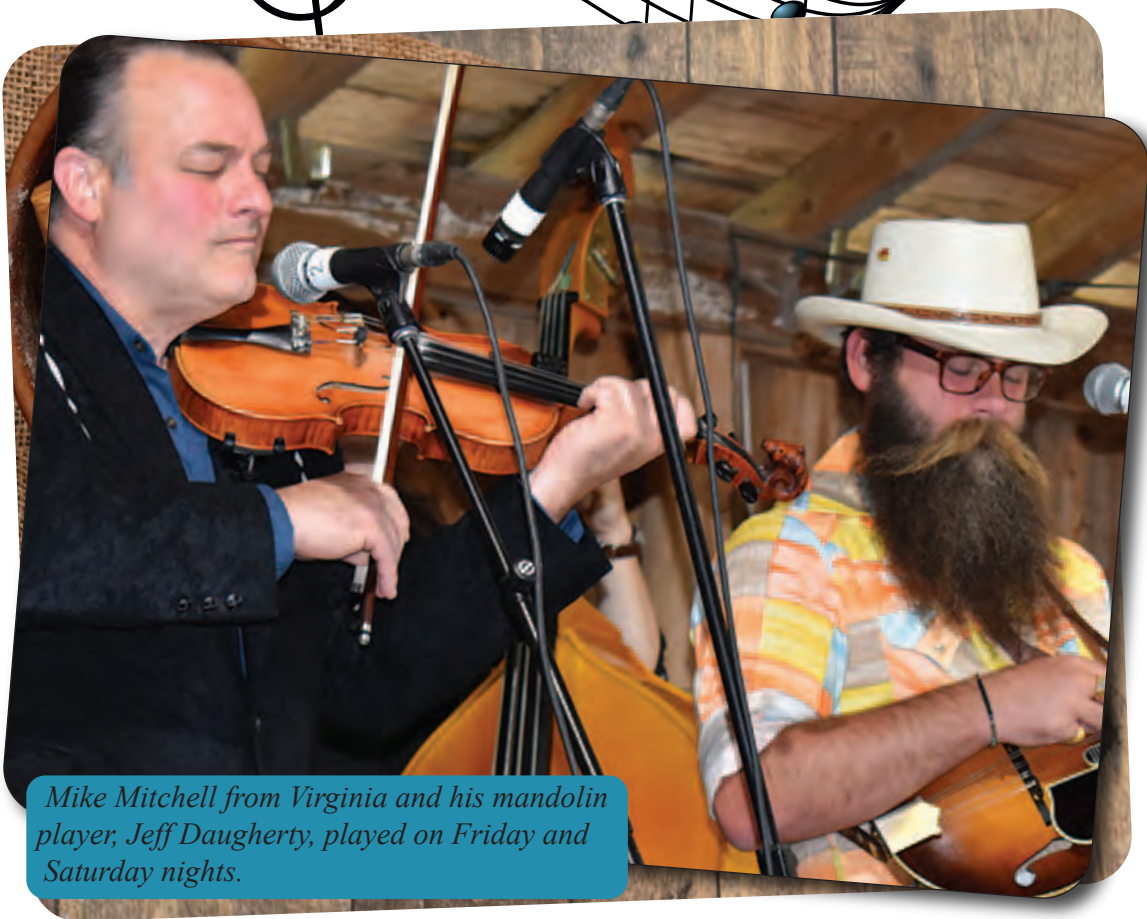
...Bluegrass festival



Far right: Dan Tyminski performs with his fiddler, Maddie Denton.

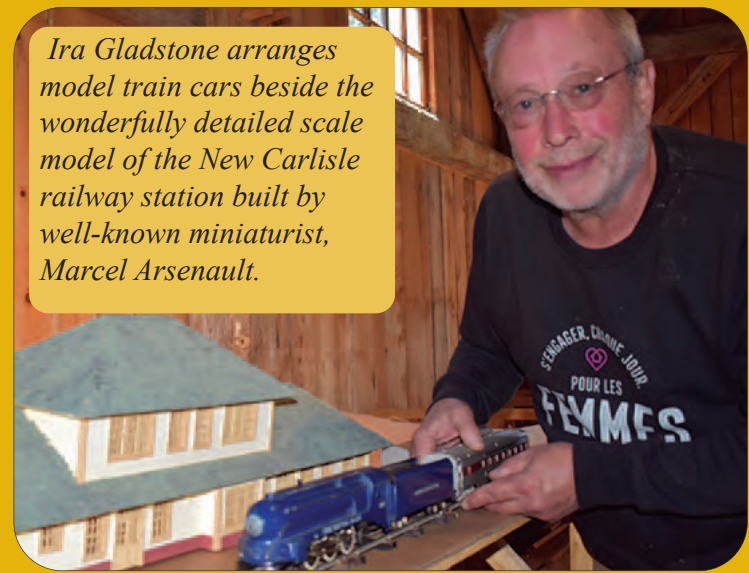


On the left, Ray Legère, and on the right, Frank Doody, played with a number of bands during the weekend.



Mike Mitchell from Virginia and his mandolin player, Jeff Daugherty, played on Friday and Saturday nights.

Photos: C. Dow



Ira Gladstone arranges model train cars beside the wonderfully detailed scale model of the New Carlisle railway station built by well-known miniaturist, Marcel Arsenault.

Photo: C. Dow

Open House for Model Railway

CYNTHIA DOW

NEW RICHMOND: - Ira Gladstone is a determined man. The New Richmond resident wants to recreate the Bay of Chaleur railway in the Almond Art Centre at Duthie's Point, but he would like some help with such a large project.

"When I first came here, I fell in love with the place, (Duthie's Point). I have been awed and saddened by the efforts and inconsistencies surrounding its survival." He believes the model railway would be a "jewel" in the Gaspé's crown and a great asset to the former heritage site.

Mr. Gladstone has 40 boxes of model trains, railway pieces and other paraphernalia that he has been saving for some 35 years. The trains are S-gauge American Flyers. Now he wants to fill the Almond Barn with a model of the railway from Matapedia to Gaspé, highlighting landmarks such as the old Cascapedia Bridge, the trestle at Douglstown and, of course, Percé Rock.

Already two model heritage railway stations have been built for him by Marcel Arsenault of Bonaventure: those of Matapedia and New Carlisle. Mr. Arsenault wants to start work on the original Gaspé station, but Mr. Gladstone feels they need more details of the building. "We are hoping people will contribute photographs of the railway. We desperately need more of the old train station at Gaspé. It is possible the curved roof was based on a Chinese design," Mr. Gladstone noted, "We want to give Mr. Arsenault the most detailed photographs possible."

In addition to photographs, Mr. Gladstone wants the display to include anecdotes about the importance of the

railway to Gaspésians through the years. "There are so many interesting stories about bringing the train here and I would love to record audio stories about the train that visitors to the model could listen to."

"But this has to be a community thing. It will take years to complete — there is no end to the details that could be included. There are so many talented people around here who could work on elements at home during the winter months." Mr. Gladstone even hopes that local schools could get involved by making things like trees for the diorama.

In addition to Mr. Arsenault's expert help with the model stations, Mr. Gladstone has been aided with the carpentry side of things by Jean-Denis Thibodeau. However, he admits he faces some daunting challenges. For example, the roof of the Art Centre is full of holes, which he has covered with some tarps. He is not sure where he can find funding for a permanent solution.

"We will have some kind of fee to join the club," he explains, "and a box for donations." He hopes a recent visit to the site by New Richmond Mayor Eric Dubé may result in some kind of support from the municipality.

Meanwhile, Mr. Gladstone will hold an Open House on Monday, September 16, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Almond Art Centre (located behind the Gendron Store) with the hope that those interested will come to find out about the project and possibly agree to take part. "Everyone is welcome!" he told SPEC.

For more information, don't hesitate to call or text Ira Gladstone at 514-594-0701 or look up the project on Facebook at "CFBDRR" (Chemin de fer Baie des Chaleurs Rail Road).